

GIVE US YOUR BEST SHOT SUBMIT YOUR BLOOMINGTON PHOTOS

We want your best photos! Help us tell Bloomington's story through your images of Bloomington events, landmarks, businesses, people, nature and more. We'd especially like photos illustrating our rich history and special events. The photos you submit may be used on the City's website, social media pages and in various City publications. Contribute photos by visiting the City's website and clicking on the submit photos icon. For more information, contact Communications Administrator Janine Hill at 952-563-8819, jhill@ci.bloomington.mn.us, or visit our website.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: PHOTO SUBMISSIONS.



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OCTOBER 2011

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When you see **WEBSITE KEYWORDS**, go to www.ci.bloomington.mn.us for more information.

COUNCIL AGAIN LOWERS PROPERTY TAX LEVY MAKING BLOOMINGTON EVEN MORE SUSTAINABLE AND COMPETITIVE

In September, the City Council set the preliminary total property tax dollar levy for 2012 at \$44,441,371. The maximum 2012 levy is a decrease from 2011, which in turn was a decrease from 2010. The City strives to be more sustainable, not only environmentally, but also economically and financially. To maintain excellent services, the City continues to budget efficiently and plan for the future while being cost effective.

IMPACT ON HOMES

Bloomington reduced its total City levy despite state changes in Market Value Homestead Credit and relative values between residential and commercial properties. The City Council's objective is to hold the median value home's 2012 property taxes for City services at \$67.82 per month, the same amount as in 2010 and 2011, with the average value home seeing a 1.45 percent decrease for 2012. See chart above right.

SUPPORTING YOUR INVESTMENT

The preliminary levy sustains Public Safety, Planning, Prevention and Maintenance, and Quality of Life services key to building and renewal, that along with public infrastructure investments support your home and business investment over the long term.

| SINGLE-FAMILY HOME MONTHLY PROPERTY TAX COST FOR CITY SERVICES | | | |
|--|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
| Median value home | \$67.82 | \$67.82 | \$67.82 |
| Average value home | \$78.01 | \$79.73 | \$78.58 |

2012 Median value home - \$207,300; 2012 Average value home - \$235,500.

The final City property tax levy for 2012 will be set in December. While the preliminary levy is a cap that cannot be exceeded when setting the final levy, the City Council will continue to look at ways to decrease the levy.

VALUES AND YOUR PROPERTY TAX

During this economic downturn, a question often heard is, "When home values have declined, why don't property taxes also decline?" While there may not be a simple answer, a good place to start is with an illustration. The graph, below, shows single-family residential property values over the past 20 years. During the 1990s, market values, as reflected in the median-valued home, averaged about 3.3 percent annual growth. Beginning in 2000, many shifted their investments to residential real estate, which resulted in

a housing market bubble. If there had not been a bubble and home market values had increased at the same rate as in the 1990s, home values still would not have appreciated to their current level even given the decline of the past few years.

Over the past 20 years, the City's overall property tax levy increased, on average, at a rate that parallels home price increases in the 1990s. The City's overall property tax levy, when adjusted for actual community growth, increased at about two-thirds the home value appreciation rate. In other words, the City did not increase its property taxes during the past decade at anywhere near the rate that market values of homes increased. At the same time, service quality increased along with significant investments in the City's infrastructure.

Continued on page 2.

SERVING THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1947 FIRE DEPARTMENT OPEN HOUSES



This year's open houses take place on **Saturday, October 15, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.**, at all fire stations. Highlights include car seat inspections and air bag demonstrations at Station 1 and Bomb Squad and Canine Unit demonstrations at Station 4. All stations will offer a coloring contest and treats for kids, smoke detector raffle and meet-and-greet session with Sparky the Fire Dog.

Fire Station open house locations:

- Station 1:** 10 West 95th Street
Station 4: 4201 West 84th Street
Station 2: 10601 Xerxes Avenue South
Station 5: 10540 Bush Lake Road
Station 3: 2050 East 86th Street
Station 6: 8601 Lakeview Road

For more information, contact the Fire Department at 952-563-4801.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: FIRE PREVENTION WEEK.

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT A GOOD TIME HAD BY ALL



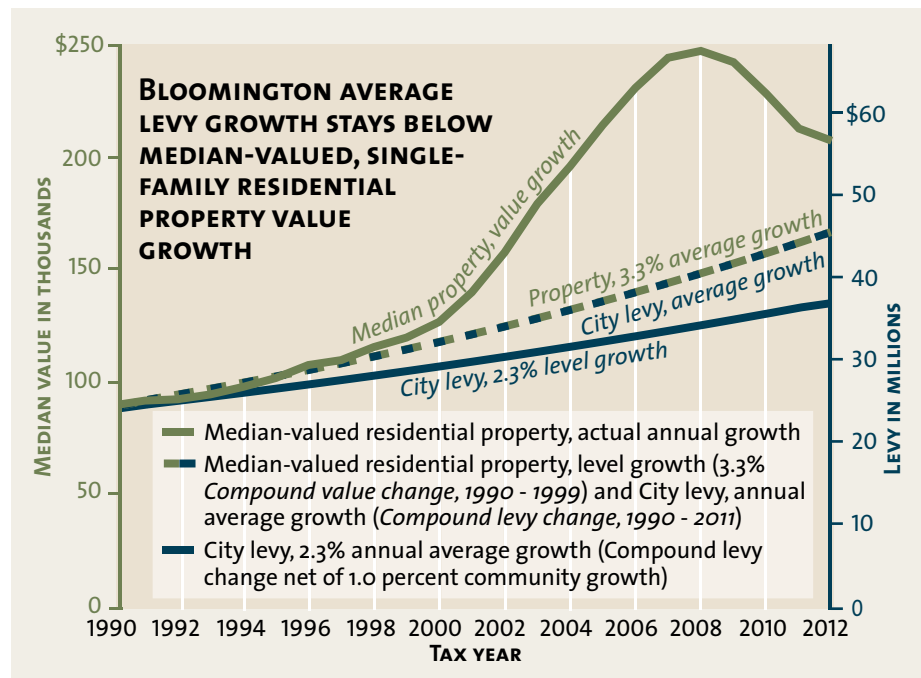
This summer's National Night Out Neighborhood Watch Program hosted 328 parties. Nearly 65 Bloomington Police Department officers and staff, including police reserves and explorers, participated in the event. In addition, representatives from the Bloomington Fire Department and Allina ambulances attended many parties with their vehicles.

For more information, call Crime Prevention Coordinator Niki Pierson at 952-563-8808.

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COUNCIL LOWERS LEVY

Continued from page 1.

REAL MARKET GROWTH

Since 2001, the City’s market value in property increased by more than 40 percent, even after a downturn in values since 2008. Commercial/ industrial market values are up 29 percent and since the 2001 property tax reform their tax capacity is up 23 percent. While the City continues to add housing units, Bloomington has seen a decrease in the number of occupants per household like other developed cities. The Census Bureau reports 537 new Bloomington housing units between 2000 and 2010. This, as well as additional commercial/ industrial developments, increased the number of taxpayers in Bloomington by more than 6 percent since 2001. In 2011, Bloomington issued building permits for more than 600 additional dwelling units already under construction, further increasing that number.

The City also absorbed the loss of Local Government Aid since 2003 and a total of \$11 million in Market Value Homestead Credit. Yet Bloomington, as a result of long-term efforts to be more efficient in providing services, remains very competitive when it comes to City taxes for all property types. See sidebar.

Bloomington is the largest net contributor to Fiscal Disparities due to its long-term success in attracting commercial/industrial businesses, which pay about 12 percent of their total property tax to the City. They make up approximately 33 percent of Bloomington’s market value and nearly 50 percent of its tax capacity – the largest of any Hennepin County community with a population over 10,000. As an example, Bloomington’s commercial/industrial market value in tax base share and total value is more than double Edina’s.

To be this property tax cost competitive, the City’s compensation and number of employees also has to be in line with these communities. It is the productivity of the City’s employees that yields such cost-effective results. Visit the City’s website to see what each of Bloomington’s services cost on a monthly basis and compare those costs with what you pay for other services such as cable, cell and Internet.

BALANCING THE BUDGET

The City is required to pass a balanced general fund budget each year. Over the past three years, as well as prior years, the City’s total current revenues from its governmental funds have not only been sufficient to fund all of its current governmental expenditures and annual debt service, but also, when combined with other financing sources and available fund balance, sufficiently covers its total capital outlay for the year. This commitment to community renewal has resulted in the City’s primary net governmental assets increasing 7 percent since 2008.

In decreasing its 2012 levy, the City looked at the longer term through financial modeling. Between 2013 - 2017,

CITY PROPERTY TAXES VERY COMPETITIVE

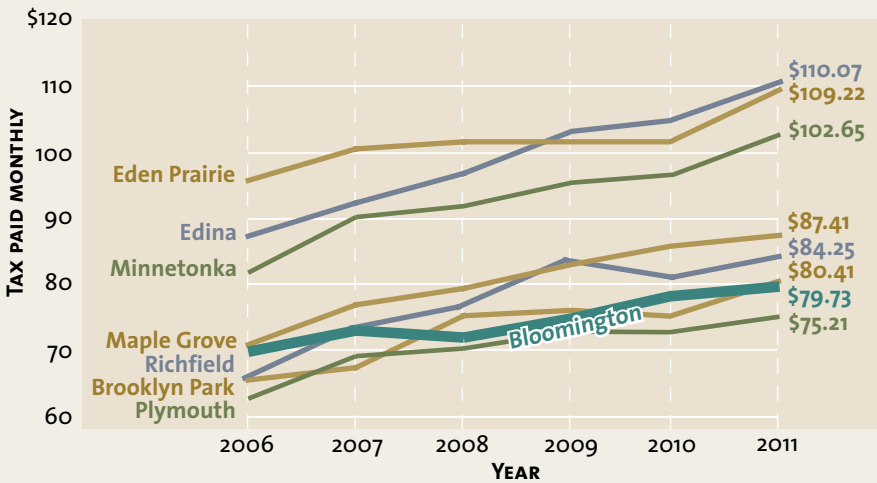
The City’s ongoing objective is to provide the best in services, while keeping property taxes competitive with neighboring communities. For years, the City used the median value home as a benchmark, although using values as a basis for comparison can be confusing as similar homes in different communities can have widely ranging values. The monthly median valued property taxes for services have stayed steady at \$67.82 for 2010, 2011 and 2012.

Another benchmark is to look at the amount that average single-family homes in each community pay for their property tax-supported services. This is calculated by taking the total amount of property taxes paid by all single-family homes and dividing that by the total number of single-family homes to determine the monthly amount. This average single-family home benchmark eliminates the issue of comparing communities based on values because it focuses on what each single-family homeowner, on average, pays to the City, which is 29 cents out of every property tax dollar they pay. See Graph A.

This comparison shows, as do the median value comparisons, that Bloomington is among the most competitive and, when adjusted for property tax aids and Fiscal Disparities, is even more competitive. See Graph B.

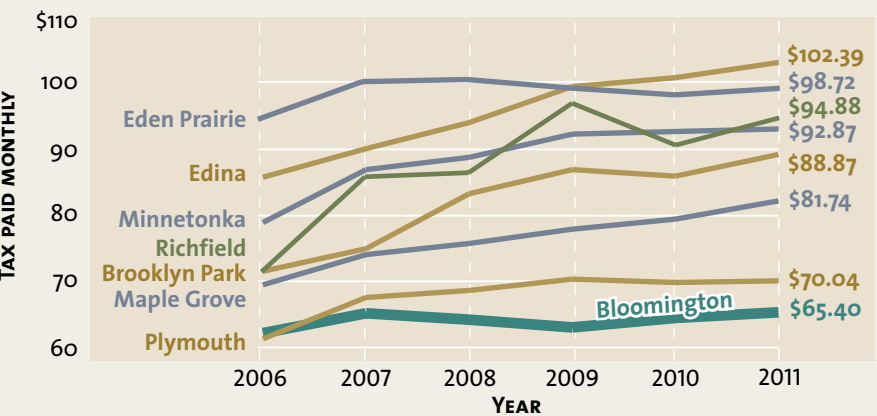
GRAPH A. PROPERTY TAX AND AIDS COSTS PER AVERAGE SINGLE-FAMILY HOME ON A LOT

Not adjusted for property tax aids and Fiscal Disparities.



GRAPH B. PROPERTY TAX AND AIDS COSTS PER AVERAGE SINGLE-FAMILY HOME ON A LOT

Adjusted for property tax aids and Fiscal Disparities.



property tax levies that support services and bonded debt will average below the total of the long-term annual average market value home appreciation plus historic annual community growth.

CAPITAL AND SERVICE INVESTMENTS

Long-term financial modeling is one reason Bloomington is one of only 31 local governments nationally with AAA bond ratings from all three ratings agencies. Key to achieving this distinction is the City’s financial strength that includes policies that prohibit the use of debt to finance current operations, as well as long-term expectations for debt, with 80 percent of debt paid back in 10 years. The City’s percentage of debt to market value is less than rating agency guidelines for AAA and substantially less than other AAA communities in the metro area.

As a result of its excellent credit rating, the City, in some years, has been able to issue debt at a lower rate than it is earning on its investments. These excellent ratings are helped by the City’s financial position, which provides for

infrastructure replacement, community renewal and working capital to take advantage of favorable construction and capital markets.

TOTAL COST COMPARISONS

The culmination of all these efforts has kept the average home’s property taxes, and also its water and sewer utility costs, among the lowest in the metro area. When added together, these make for a very attractive combination of quality services at affordable prices.

The City Council manages for the long term by modeling the future years and then working to keep both home and commercial property taxes very competitive with neighboring cities. The City Council has used the City’s organizational and financial strength to make Bloomington the very attractive community it has become over the decades and is committed to maintaining a first-class community, protecting your investment in Bloomington well into the future.

For background information on this article, visit the City’s website.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: PROPERTY TAX.

BRIEFING

Volume 19, Number 5

The Briefing, published bimonthly by the City of Bloomington, is mailed to our residents and businesses. Direct comments and requests for Braille, larger print or computer disk to Communications Administrator Janine Hill, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington MN 55431-3027; PH 952-563-8819; TTY 952-563-8740; FAX 952-563-8715; E-MAIL jhill@ci.bloomington.mn.us. Website: www.ci.bloomington.mn.us

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The City of Bloomington complies with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its services, programs, or activities. Upon request, accommodation will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all City of Bloomington services, programs, and activities. The City has designated coordinators to facilitate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and to coordinate compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as mandated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations. For more information, contact the Human Services Division, City of Bloomington, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington, MN 55431-3027; 952-563-8733 (Voice); 952-563-8740 (TTY).

Upon request, this information can be available in Braille, large print, audio tape and/or electronic format.

AWESOME ACCOLADES

COMMUNICATING EXCELLENCE

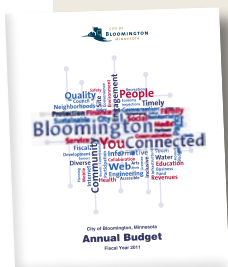
CITY WINS BIG IN NATIONAL COMPETITION

The City of Bloomington brought home two awards from this year's City-County Communications and Marketing Association (3CMA) national competition honoring the best in government communications. The City was honored with the first-place Savvy Award for its internal newsletter, the *Insider*, and the third-place Award of Excellence for the *Briefing*.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: AWARDS.

FINANCIAL REPORTING EXCELLENCE

CITY WINS BUDGET AWARD



The City was once again the recipient of the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for its annual budget for the

fiscal year beginning January 1, 2011. The award, given by the Government Finance Officers Association, is the highest form of recognition in governmental budgeting.

"This award represents a significant achievement by your City organization," GFOA Technical Services Center Director Stephen J. Gauthier said.

To receive the award, a government organization must publish a budget document that meets program criteria as a policy document, operations guide, financial plan and communications tool. The City has received the award for the last 15 years.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: FINANCE AWARDS.



GOOD TO KNOW

FEEDING WILDLIFE

MAINTAINING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Did you know the City Code prohibits the feeding of wild animals in Bloomington? Feeding animals in suburban and urban areas can quickly become a nuisance when feral cats, raccoons, skunks and even ducks and geese become frequent visitors. Aside from destroying lawns, gardens and garbage containers, some wild animals who linger for food left outside take up residence.

The ordinance is in place to reduce the occurrence of issues with wild animals foraging for feed and creating a public nuisance. The ordinance also helps prevent issues with predator wildlife, such as coyotes, foxes and wild turkeys, that may become aggressive during breeding season. The City's goal is to guard resources and prevent conflicts between humans and wildlife.

To avoid creating an unwanted wild animal problem or a mess on your lawn when feeding song birds in your backyard, use only birdseed mixtures in squirrel-proof feeders located at least five feet off the ground.

For more information, contact Bloomington Animal Control at 952-953-4942.

LIVING WELL IN BLOOMINGTON

A HEALTHY COMMUNITY IS A STRONG COMMUNITY

Everyone knows that the key to good health is getting enough physical activity, like walking and biking, and eating healthy foods. The City of Bloomington wants to ensure that making the healthy choice becomes the easy choice for all who live, work and play in our community.



Bloomington, along with the cities of Richfield and Edina, is partnering with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota on a new initiative to remove barriers to healthy living in our community and support people in their efforts to be healthier.

Efforts will be focused on building on the success of some of the City's current projects, such as the Farmers Market, community gardens, and updating and expanding biking and walking trails, and looking for new ways to bring healthy options to schools, workplaces and neighborhoods.

The idea is to create sustainable changes that make physical activity and healthy eating accessible to everyone.

For more information, visit do-town.org.



CHANGES AT CITY CLERK'S OFFICE



TOM FERBER SAYS GOODBYE

After more than eight years as Bloomington's City Clerk, Thomas Ferber retired in July.

Ferber, who earned a bachelor's degree in public administration from Metropolitan State University in 1985 and later a master's from Hamline University, retired after 26 years in government administration. Along with a lengthy list of committees and memberships, his previous employment history includes three years as administrative services manager for Washington County (MN), as well as serving as city clerk for the city of Richfield for 15 years.

Ferber also served as co-chair of the Minnesota Clerks and Finance Officers Association and League of Minnesota Cities Elections Task Force. He served as a City representative on the Finding Common Ground on Election Reform at the Humphrey Institute and as Deputy Recount Official for Hennepin County in the 2010 governor's contest.



JANET LEWIS APPOINTED NEW CITY CLERK

Janet Lewis began as Bloomington City Clerk in August. Lewis, a native of New Hope, Minnesota, has more than 12 years experience in government administration as city clerk for Crystal, Minnesota. She has a strong background in leading and managing elections, licensing and public information, as well as extensive experience leading and training judges and city staff for elections.

Lewis is a certified election administrator and municipal clerk who graduated from North Hennepin Community College. In her more than 12 years in government administration, Lewis assisted Hennepin County with the 2010 recount and conducted a 2008 recount, assisted with council vacancy process and appointments in 2010 and 2007, and greatly improved customer service by redesigning administrative processes for the city of Crystal.

RAMBLER REDO

BUILDING UP: THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

Is your family growing too big for your rambler? Or maybe you just want a little more space, but don't want to sell your home in a down market? The Rambler Redo series, now online, will show you how to address some of the more common updating and remodeling issues in one of the coolest and most common types of home in Bloomington: the rambler.

Adding a second story is probably the most dramatic change that you can make. For a rambler, building upward can add square footage without altering the original footprint of a home and sapping valuable yard space. Tan Nguyen from Nguyen Architects offers these tips for adding value and

square footage to your rambler by adding a second story. They include:

- A second story can be the perfect location for a master suite and additional bedrooms or office space.
- The new addition should be blended to achieve a cohesive look inside and out. However, large trim around windows and trim bands break-up and add character to the siding.
- Be aware of structural issues. Adding a second story means adding more weight to the existing footings.



- Think about where you would like a stairway. Usually a stairway takes up part of an existing room or closet on the first floor. A long hallway may also accommodate a stairway.

Before making any additions, it is important to check with the City's Building and Inspection Division at 952-563-8930 for zoning and setback requirements.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: RAMBLER REDO.

FALL REMINDER
KEEP LEAVES OUT OF THE STREET



Did you know leaves are one of the main causes of poor water quality in the metro area?

When leaves enter storm sewers, they travel into ponds and lakes, causing excess algae growth that severely impacts the health of the water. In addition, leaves block storm drains and can cause flooding in neighborhoods.

As you rake or blow the leaves in your yard this fall, be sure to keep them off the street and out of storm drains. You can also help protect our water bodies by removing leaves and other debris from nearby storm drains.

When cleaning up, remember to use compostable bags for yard waste. As of 2010, per a new state law, plastic bags once used to collect fall leaves are no longer accepted by many garbage haulers, including those in Bloomington.

For more information, call Environmental Health at 952-563-8934.

STOP STORMWATER IN ITS TRACKS
PREVENTING RUNOFF PROTECTS THE ENVIRONMENT



Stormwater that runs off hard surfaces, such as rooftops, roads and driveways, can harm lakes and wetlands through the pollutants it carries.

Stormwater runoff can also cause flooding and increases erosion.

You can make a difference by stopping stormwater where it drops and preventing excess water from running off your property. Once slowed down, water soaks into the ground, evaporates or can be collected and reused for gardening. Follow these easy and economical techniques to stop and infiltrate water:

- Use downspouts to direct water onto lawns. Having water run off your roof and spread across the lawn will allow the water to infiltrate your soil.
- Use a rainwater barrel to capture water from roofs. An 80-gallon barrel emptied regularly can capture 3,275 gallons of water per year.
- Plant a rainwater garden. A 100-square-foot rainwater garden can capture 9,000 gallons of water per year. Native plants in a rainwater garden increase infiltration and attract a variety of birds and butterflies.

For more information, contact Engineering at 952-563-4870.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: SUSTAINABILITY.

Earth Action Heroes protect the earth. Whether it's saving energy or guarding Bloomington's precious natural resources, these individuals are making a difference. Here are your neighbors in action...

EARTH ACTION HEROES
SOLAR POWER SUPERSTARS

When it comes to reducing their carbon footprints, Bloomington residents Brian Henning and Melissa Gross think the sky, or more specifically the sun, is the limit.

The two, who have been married four years, recently started recognizing major energy savings with the solar panel system they installed at their Bloomington home last summer. The couple's south-facing home, which features external solar strips on its roof, is ideal for converting solar power into usable energy.

"The power of the sun was there for our taking," Henning said. "We just needed to harness it."

Henning said a solar panel system is great for families who plan on living in their current home for a long time, as the system pays for itself within 12-15 years, depending on energy prices. Henning points to the energy rebates and tax incentives

his home receives as the driving factor behind the installation of the system.

The panels convert the sun's rays into electricity for the couple's home, and when they produce a surplus, the extra energy is bought by Xcel Energy, thus lowering energy costs for everyone.

"Any electricity that we don't use gets sent to an electrical grid to be used by others," Henning said. "In the summer when the days are longer and sunnier, I enjoy getting our electricity bill to see how much we are saving."

Henning and Gross' sustainable and energy-saving practices don't stop at solar panels on the roof. Their home is also outfitted with a solar oven, a geothermal heating and cooling system, a patio and furniture made from recycled milk jugs and a meter that tells them how much energy they are producing. Adding to their list of sustainable practices, the couple uses their table



scraps as compost in their garden, which is watered by a rainwater barrel. When they aren't eating fruits and vegetables from their own garden, they shop at food co-ops and the Bloomington Farmers Market, eating organically grown food whenever possible.

"I wouldn't say that I have encouraged other residents to do what we have done, but people have actually stopped by to ask us about our solar panel system and I am always happy to tell them about it," Henning said. "Everyone has to make their own decision on whether solar panels make sense for them or not. Our Bloomington home just happened to be a great fit."

A CLEAN SWEEP
NEW STREET SWEEPER BETTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT



The City's annual street sweeping program is getting cleaner – and greener – with the addition of a regenerative air sweeper.

The sweeper removes fine sand and silt better than mechanical sweepers by using a controlled blast of air to dislodge debris from the street's surface. All debris that is picked up is then directed up a heavy-duty suction hose into a collection bin. The regenerative air feature means the sweeper never exhausts polluted air into the atmosphere like a vacuum sweeper.

The street sweeping program is part of the City's Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program. Street sweeping not only beautifies the city; it prevents debris from entering the City's stormwater system and polluting nearby water bodies.

For more information, contact Public Works at 952-563-8767.

EFFORTS IN SUSTAINABILITY

PRAIRIE HOME COMPANIONS
CITY CULTIVATES NATURAL LANDSCAPES

You may have noticed a large swath of brown grass on the east lawn of Bloomington Civic Plaza. That's because turf on the east and north sides of the building and along James Avenue in front of the Public Works building is being transformed into prairie areas full of wildflowers and native grasses.

The process began in July with killing turf grass to make room for planting seeds and seedlings.

"Although it may not look like much now, in a year or two these areas will be filled with 26 different varieties of wildflowers and six types of prairie grasses," Assistant Maintenance Superintendent Paul Edwardson said.

"The City's Prairie Restoration Program has been protecting and preserving Bloomington's 27 naturalized prairie areas for more than 15 years. It is only natural that the program would extend to City buildings."

Edwardson, who will oversee maintenance of the prairie areas once they are installed, describes the restoration as a return to the type of Minnesota landscape seen 100 years ago.

"In the long term, these areas will not only look beautiful and attract birds and butterflies, but they will require far less maintenance and resources than turf."

For more information on the City's sustainable practices, visit the City's website or call Paul Edwardson at 952-563-8762.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: SUSTAINABILITY.



FOR YOUR INFORMATION



MAKING CONNECTIONS LATINO AND SOMALI FAIRS

Human Services will host a day of resource fairs for the Latino and Somali communities in Bloomington, **Saturday, October 29**, at Bloomington Civic Plaza.

This free event will provide Bloomington residents with an opportunity to connect with different services in the community. A variety of state and local government agencies along with nonprofit organizations will share information about themselves and the services they offer.

- **Latino fair** 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
- **Somali fair** 1 - 3:30 p.m.

To apply to be a exhibitor for a \$30 fee, call or visit the City's website.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: FAIRS.

BUILDING RESOURCES AND RELATIONSHIPS HUMAN SERVICES STRENGTHENS THE COMMUNITY

Human Services provides exceptional programs and services to community members of all ages. Programs are accessible to youth, older adults, families and multicultural communities.

Programs are held at **Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road**, or **Creekside Community Center, 9801 Penn Avenue South**, unless otherwise noted.

For more information, call Human Services at 952-563-8733 or TTY 952-563-8740.

To sign up for e-mail updates, go to our website, click on [E-Subscribe](#) and subscribe to "Human Services."

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: HUMAN SERVICES.

OPENING MINDS, OPENING DOORS DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS WORKSHOP

The fact that someone has a disability doesn't mean they are not capable of great things. The Bloomington Human Rights Commission and Disability Employment Awareness Committee will host the Disability Employment Awareness Workshop on **Wednesday, October 26**, at Bloomington Civic Plaza, from **8:30 a.m. - noon**.

This free workshop is designed to provide business leaders in the community with an increased understanding of the benefits of hiring and working with people with disabilities. The workshop will cover the technical aspects of making accommodations, personal stories from successful employers of people with disabilities and more. Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion at Wells Fargo Bank Philomena Morrissey Satre will be the keynote speaker.

To apply to be an exhibitor for a \$30 fee, call or visit the City's website.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: DEAM.



HONORING OUR HEROES ANNUAL VETERANS' APPRECIATION LUNCH AND PHOTO WALL



If you believe the saying "a picture is worth a thousand words," join Human Services as it displays a lifetime of stories that pay tribute to Bloomington veterans and active service members at the annual Veterans Appreciation Lunch.

The lunch will be held **Thursday, November 10, 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.**, at Creekside Community Center.

The keynote speaker will be Barbara Farrell, president of the Minnesota Chapter of American Gold Star Mothers. Entertainment will be provided by the Minneapolis Police Band.

Meal cost is \$6 for guests ages 60 and under and \$3 for guests ages 60 and older. (A NAPIS form required.)

A complimentary lunch will be provided for veterans and active duty personnel. Advanced registration is required. To register, call 952-563-4948, TTY 952-563-4944, or e-mail reservations@ci.bloomington.mn.us.

The Veterans Photo Wall will be on display throughout November at Creekside Community Center.

The current collection features more than 250 photos of men and women from all branches of service. If you would like to submit a photo for the 2011 display, visit Creekside or e-mail humanservices@ci.bloomington.mn.us.

Your original photo will be scanned and returned to you.

GIVE THE GIFT OF TIME VOLUNTEERS STRENGTHEN THE COMMUNITY



Are you looking for ways to get involved in your community? Human Services has a variety of opportunities available for individuals of all ages and abilities at Creekside Community Center with its Bloomington Senior Program. Special projects are also available seasonally with other Human Services programs, activities and events. For more information on Human Services and other volunteer opportunities, visit the City's website.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: VOLUNTEERING.



UPCOMING PARTIES DON'T MISS OUT ON THESE DELICIOUS LUNCH EVENTS

Lunch parties at Creekside Community Center don't just provide you with a nutritious meal, they are a fun way to relax and enjoy entertainment while connecting with your friends and neighbors. Lunch parties may include live entertainment, games, door prizes and much more.

The cost of a meal is a suggested contribution of up to \$3 for guests 60 and older (NAPIS form required) and \$6 for guests under 60.

Upcoming themed parties include:

- **Monday, October 31**
Wear a costume to lunch and enjoy some treats on Halloween.
- **Thursday, November 17**
Enjoy lunch, play Turkey Bingo and listen to live music by The Mouldy Figs.

To register, call 952-563-4948, TTY 952-563-4944 or e-mail reservations@ci.bloomington.mn.us.

HEALTH MATTERS

FITNESS MATTERS HUMAN SERVICES SENIOR PROGRAM KEEPS YOUR MIND SHARP AND BODY FIT

Do you want to sharpen your memory? Get in shape before the holidays or just gain a better understanding of your health insurance? Look no further than the Human Services Senior Program at Creekside Community Center.

Among its many offerings, the Senior Program provides a wide variety of health and fitness-related classes and events, including Dakim Brain Fitness, a unique touch-screen computer program that engages users in mentally stimulating and entertaining exercises, and Low Impact Exercise Class, a free aerobics class that meets Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9 - 10 a.m.

For more information, call or [e-mail Human Services](#).



to provide support and guidance to the independent senior in their lives. Team members can coordinate scheduling visits, print care records that can be taken to doctor's appointments and research community-based resources like lawn care, housecleaning and transportation.

Caregivers can also find support for themselves. The website offers ideas and resources that can help caregivers find ways to balance their many roles and prevent burnout.

Independent Home Living is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing help to caregivers and maximizing independence for seniors. The City of Bloomington funds Senior Community Services.

For more information, visit www.carenexion.org.

FREE ONLINE SERVICES NEW WEBSITE SERVES SENIORS, EMPOWERS CAREGIVERS

The CareNexion website, created by Independent Home Living, provides online tools and telephone support to aid in the care of independent seniors.

Visitors to CareNexion.org can set up a care team of family members, volunteers and healthcare professionals



HERE'S TO YOUR HEALTH

PREPARING FOR WINTER WEATHER

GET YOUR PROPERTY READY BEFORE THE SNOW FLIES

Winter and snow go hand in hand. Follow these tips to prepare the exterior of your property for winter weather, while also helping the City provide better service during a snow emergency.



Prepare the exterior of your home for snow:

- Clean leaves and other debris from your gutter. Dirty, clogged gutters can cause ice and snow buildup on your roof, leading to costly leaks.
- Turn on your snow blower to make sure it's in good working order.
- Drain your outdoor hoses and sprinklers and bring them inside so they don't freeze or crack.
- Make sure all your doors and windows are sealed and insulated tightly. Inspect doors and windows for cracks in the glass or deformed frames. Install storm doors and windows if you have them.



Help the City provide better snow plowing services:

- Maintain and repair mailbox posts. Mailboxes should not extend past the face of the curb and should be constructed of sturdy four-by-four lumber. Additionally, there should be no less than 45 inches between the ground and the bottom of the mailbox.
- Familiarize yourself with the City's snow-related ordinances and snow emergency procedures before a snow storm happens.

To receive snow alerts, visit the City's website, click on *E-Subscribe* and sign up to receive e-mail updates or follow the City on Facebook and Twitter.

For more information, visit the City's website, contact Assistant Maintenance Superintendent Jim Eiler at 952-563-8766 or e-mail jeiler@ci.bloomington.mn.us.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: SNOW EMERGENCY.

CURBING UNDERAGE DRINKING

BLOOMINGTON CITY COUNCIL APPROVES SOCIAL HOST ORDINANCE



Bloomington recently joined 65 Minnesota cities and 15 counties in adopting a social host ordinance. Bloomington City Council approved the new ordinance, designed to discourage underage alcohol use, in August.

The Social Host Ordinance makes it a criminal offense to host events where persons under 21 years of age are permitted to consume alcohol. Who is considered a "host" under the new ordinance? A host is the person who knowingly provides a venue for underage drinking to occur, regardless of their age and regardless of who provided the alcohol. Property owners and parents who were unaware of illegal alcohol consumption on their property while they were away from the residence do not meet the definition of a host.

Violation of the social host ordinance is a misdemeanor punishable by up to 90 days in jail and/or a fine of up to \$1,000.

To read the ordinance in its entirety, visit the City's website.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: SOCIAL HOST.



FOCUS YOUR DRIVING STEER CLEAR OF DISTRACTIONS

When you're concentrating on the road there's no time for secondary tasks. That's why it is illegal in Minnesota for drivers to compose, read or send a text message or access the Internet on a wireless device when their vehicle is in motion or in traffic.

According to the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, driver distraction is the leading crash factor in Minnesota, accounting for around 20 percent of all crashes annually, resulting in at least 70 deaths and 350 injuries. To reduce your risk, incorporate the following actions into your daily driving habits:

- Do not text or talk on a cell phone while driving.
- If driving alone, map out destinations in advance, and pull over to study a map or program the GPS.
- Learn to identify and anticipate potentially hazardous situations such as vehicles stopping suddenly.
- Always be on the lookout for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Allow yourself time to react to hazards by maintaining proper following distances.
- Check with your insurance company on reduced rates for completing defensive driving courses.

For more information, visit www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org.

KNOW THE DRILL

PRACTICE FIRE SAFETY IN YOUR HOME

Fire safety is serious business – that's why the City's Fire Prevention Division recommends that all residents sit down with their families and not only make an escape plan, but practice it.



Follow these tips to prepare your family in case of a fire:

- Make a map of your house with all possible exits and check that all doors and windows in your home open easily.
- Stay low while moving through smoke-filled rooms and hallways.
- Designate a meeting place that is a safe distance from your home to regroup in case of a fire.
- Under no circumstances should anyone go back into a burning structure. Bloomington firefighters should be the only ones performing rescues.

For more information, call Fire Inspector Kristopher Kaiser at 952-563-8968.

HALLOWEEN SAFETY TIPS FROM BLOOMINGTON POLICE



The time for trick-or-treating is fast approaching. Before you head out for your Halloween festivities, review these safety tips:

- Make sure your child's costume is reflective and flame retardant.
- Carry a flashlight or light stick.
- Children should be supervised by an adult while trick-or-treating.
- Keep in mind Bloomington weekday curfews:
 - Under 12 years-old – 9 p.m.
 - 12 - 14 years-old – 10 p.m.
 - 15 - 17 years-old – 11 p.m.
- If you're passing out candy, leave on an outside light and lock your door between visits.
- Check all candy before eating it, especially if your child has food allergies.
- For a safe and fun Halloween, attend the City's annual Halloween party, *see page 7*.

For more information, contact Officer Heidi Miller at 952-563-4975 or hmillier@ci.bloomington.mn.us.

PROTECT YOUR PETS OBTAIN A PET LICENSE



All dogs, cats and ferrets, six months and older, must be licensed and vaccinated against rabies in Bloomington. The license tag attached to your pet's collar is not only important to show your pet has been vaccinated against rabies, but also proves ownership and helps to facilitate your pet's safe return if it becomes lost.

License applications are available on the City's website or at the Licensing counter located on the first floor of Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road. If you have previously licensed your pet, a yearly renewal application will be mailed to you in November.

All pet owners should supply a copy of their pet's rabies certificate with their application.

For more information, contact Licensing at 952-563-8728.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: PET LICENSING.

EMBRACE THE COLD

VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME AT AN OUTDOOR ICE RINK



Parks and Recreation is looking for a few good volunteer outdoor ice rink attendants to help at neighborhood warming houses available to the community.

Responsibilities include opening and closing park shelter buildings, supervising rink activities and interacting with skaters. Rinks are typically open mid-December through mid-February, depending on weather conditions. The application deadline is **Friday, November 4**. Training takes place in November for qualified volunteers.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: VOLUNTEER PARKS.

GET OUT AND ACTIVE

TRICK-OR-TREAT?

GET IN THE HALLOWEEN SPIRIT AT ANNUAL BASH

Bloomington's Annual Citywide Halloween Party takes place **Monday, October 31, 6 - 8 p.m.**, at Northwestern Health Sciences University, West 84th Street and Penn Avenue South. Preschoolers through fourth graders, accompanied by an adult, are invited. Activities include "Trick or Treat Alley," games, prizes and much more. Admission is free. Donations of nonperishable food items to the VEAP Food Shelf are greatly appreciated.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: HALLOWEEN.

A TUMBLING GOOD TIME
L'IL FLIPS WITH L'IL FLIPSTERS

L'il Flipsters Gymnastics is back again for children ages 30 months to kindergarten. This mobile gymnastics organization provides gymnastics training and motor skill development in a safe and fun environment. New sessions begin every month. Classes are held at Bloomington Ice Garden, 3600 West 98th Street, Tuesday and Friday mornings and afternoons. Cost is \$30 per three-week session and \$40 for a four-week session.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: FLIPSTERS.

PICKLEBALLERS REJOICE
TENNIS-BADMINTON HYBRID GAINS FOLLOWING AND COURTS

A group of 250 pickleball enthusiasts held a grand opening ceremony at the recently completed pickleball courts at Westwood Park, 3490 West 109th Street.

To accommodate a growing community of pickleball players, the tennis courts at the park were recently updated to include four pickleball courts. One tennis court at the park was converted into three pickleball courts, while another was changed to include striping for a pickleball court within the existing court boundaries.

Westwood Courts are the City's first permanent pickleball facility. The City has been striping other courts for both tennis and pickleball at an additional cost of \$500 per court. As City tennis courts are renovated, pickleball striping will be considered.

Pickleball is a sport similar to tennis where players use a hard paddle and smaller court. Pickleball isn't only for adults. The courts' close proximity to Westwood Elementary School makes them ideal for school groups to use.

CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Located in Bloomington Civic Plaza at the corner of West 98th Street and Old Shakopee Road, the Center for the Arts is a first-class facility housing six arts organizations. For facility information, call 952-563-8889. For exhibit information and events, visit www.bloomingtonartcenter.com and click on "Exhibitions," or call 952-563-8575.

GALLERY HOURS

Hours: M - F 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.
Sa 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Su 1 - 10 p.m.

For all theater tickets, call the Box Office at 952-563-8575.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS:
CENTER FOR THE ARTS.



INEZ GREENBERG GALLERY

JURIED ART EXHIBITION

Bloomington Art Center's *Annual Members' Juried Art Exhibition*, featuring the works of members, runs **October 27 - December 2**. Opening reception and awards ceremony is October 27, 6 - 8 p.m.

GIFTS IN THE GALLERY

The annual holiday sale, featuring works by local artists, runs **December 7 - 21**. A festive reception is scheduled for December 7, 6 - 8 p.m.

GET CREATIVE
BTAC FALL CLASSES

Bloomington Theatre and Art Center (BTAC) offers visual art classes and workshops in painting, drawing, clay, photography and more for adults, in addition to theater classes for children. For a catalog of fall classes, call 952-563-8575 or visit www.bloomingtonartcenter.com.

ATRIUM GALLERY

INSTRUCTOR, STUDENT ART SHOW



Landscape by student Susanna Henry.

The Instructor, Student Art Show runs **November 17 - January 13**. Artists' reception is November 17, 6 - 8 p.m.

SCHNEIDER THEATER

SWEET CHARITY

Bloomington Civic Theatre presents the classic Neil Simon comedy, *Sweet Charity*, **October 21 - November 19**. Tickets are \$28. Student and senior discounts are available. For more information, visit www.bloomingtoncivictheatre.org.

SPECIAL EVENTS

BLOOMINGTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The Bloomington Symphony Orchestra presents *Optimism and Despair*, conducted by Nobuyoshi Yasuda and featuring violinist Rebecca Corruccini, **Sunday, November 13, 3 p.m.**, at St. Michael's Lutheran Church, 9201 Normandale Boulevard.

BLOOMINGTON ARMORY ANTIQUES SHOW AND SALE



The 23rd annual Bloomington Armory Antiques Show and Sale to benefit the arts will be held **Saturday and Sunday, October 29 and 30**, at 3300 West 98th Street. Hosted by the Continental Ballet Company, the event will feature a variety of merchandise. Admission is \$4.50. Food will be available for purchase. For more information, call 952-563-8562.

LET'S PLAY BALL!
VISITORS TO RED HADDOX FIELD GREETED BY NEW MURAL

Visitors to the Toro Grandstand at Red Haddox Field, 9000 Portland Avenue South, will be greeted by a new mural created by the City's Communications staff.

Depicting a team and fans enjoying a game, the mural was made possible by a generous donation from the Toro Company.

The mural installation also marks the completion of improvements at the field, which underwent a major renovation in 2010 that included a new grandstand with 500 seats, press box, dugouts, backstop and a 40-foot net to catch stray balls.

BORN AGAIN JOCKS
IT'S INDOOR VOLLEYBALL TIME!

The Born Again Jocks volleyball league welcomes men, 55 years and older, of all skill levels, to enjoy volleyball at Jefferson High School, 4001 West 102nd Street.

For more information, contact Don Wilkie at 952-884-2146 or Don Wagoner at doje65@netzero.net.

GENERAL ELECTION

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8 ON THE BALLOT

CITY

- Mayor
- Councilmember at Large
- Councilmember, District III
- Councilmember, District IV

BLOOMINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT #271

- School Board Members (3)

SAMPLE BALLOT

Sample ballots are available to view online.

VOTING ASSISTANCE



Tell the election judge if you need assistance at your polling place. All sites are accessible and have AutoMARK voter-assist terminals to help voters who have difficulty in marking the optical scan paper ballot.

VOTER REGISTRATION

Qualified citizens must be registered to vote. Preregistration closes **Tuesday, October 18, 5 p.m.** Voter registration applications are available from most government offices and on the City’s website. If you are unable to preregister, you can still register at your polling place on Election Day with one of the proofs of residence authorized by Minnesota law. A complete list of Election Day voter registration proof of residence documents is available on the City’s website. You can update or renew your driver’s license or Minnesota I.D. card at the Motor Vehicle Office at 9930 Logan Avenue South.

ABSENTEE VOTING

Minnesota law allows absentee voting for individuals with special circumstances. Voters are only eligible to receive an absentee ballot for one of the following reasons:

- Disabled or ill.
- An election judge serving in another precinct.
- Absent from the precinct.
- Unable to go to the polling place due to a religious holiday or belief.

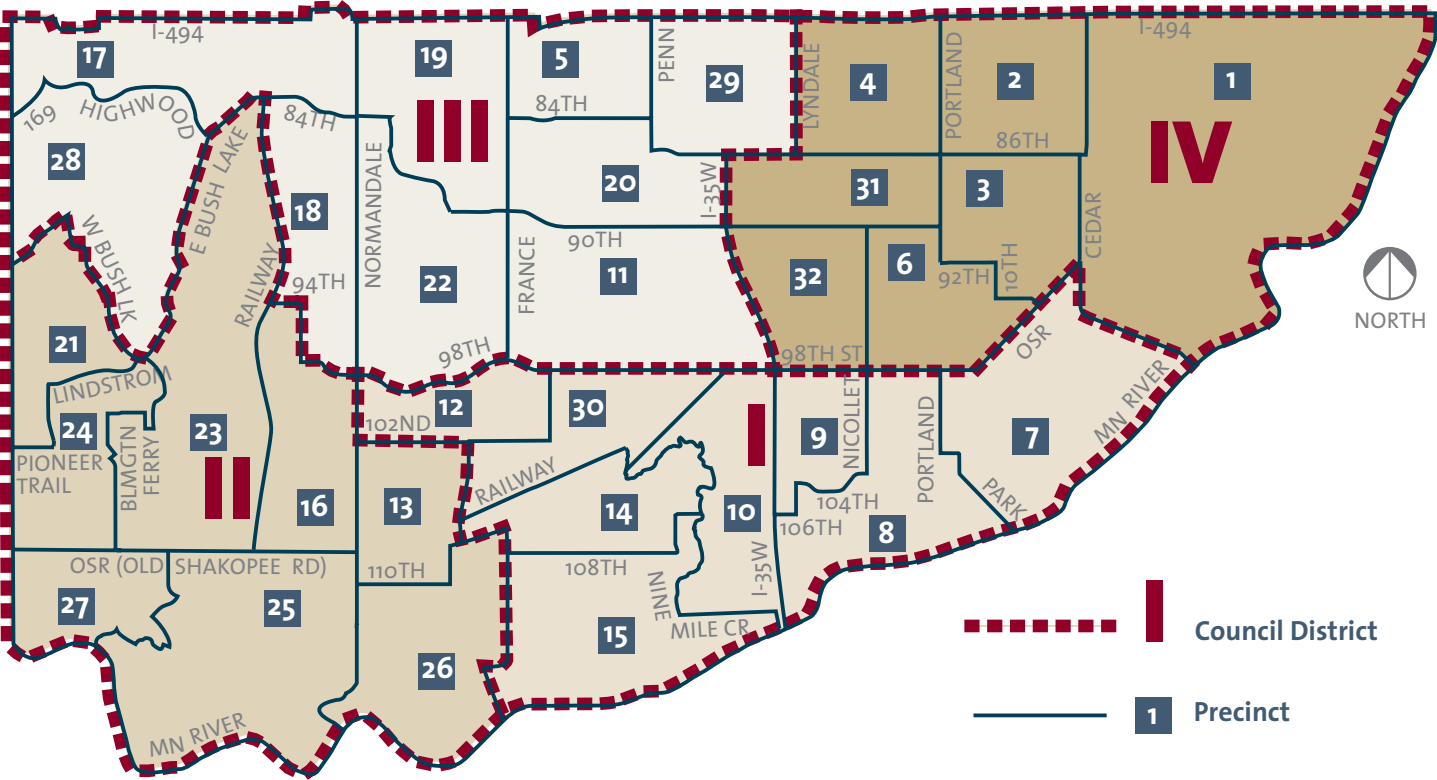
Absentee ballot applications are available at Bloomington Civic Plaza or online.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: VOTING.

VOTING INFORMATION: 952-563-8729 – WWW.CI.BLOOMINGTON.MN.US, KEYWORD: VOTING

2011 BLOOMINGTON POLLING PLACES

POLLS ARE OPEN FROM 7 A.M. TO 8 P.M. ON ELECTION DAY.



| Precinct/Polling location | Entrance/Parking |
|--|---|
| 1 Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center 3815 American Boulevard East | West entrance Visitor lot (W) |
| 2 Portland Avenue Methodist Church 8000 Portland Avenue South | Main entrance West lot |
| 3 Cedar Valley Church 8600 Bloomington Avenue | South entrance – Door 3, South lot |
| 4 Unity South Church 7950 1st Avenue South | Main entrance South lot |
| 5 Southtown Baptist Church 2600 West 82nd Street | Main entrance (W) Northwest lot |
| 6 Bloomington Lutheran Church 9350 Portland Avenue South | Main entrance North lot |
| 7 Indian Mounds Elementary School 9801 - 11th Avenue South | Main entrance (N) Northwest lot |
| 8 Riverside Reformed Church 10201 Nicollet Avenue South | Southeast entrance East lot |
| 9 Nativity of Mary School 9901 East Bloomington Freeway | NE school entrance Northeast lot |
| 10 St. Luke’s Lutheran Church 1701 West Old Shakopee Road | Northeast entrance North lot |
| 11 Bloomington Nat’l. Guard Armory 3300 West 98th Street | Main entrance (W) West lot |
| 12 Crosspoint Church 9801 France Avenue South | Main entrance (E) East lot |
| 13 Hubert Olson Elementary School 4501 West 102nd Street | Main entr. (NW) West lot – disabled use front drive |
| 14 Mount Hope Lutheran Church 3601 West Old Shakopee Road | Main entrance (S) South lot |
| 15 Westwood Elementary School 3701 West 108th Street | Main entrance (N) West lot |
| 16 Normandale Hylands United Methodist Church 9920 Normandale Boulevard South | Northeast entrance (Left doors) North lot |
| 17 Peace Lutheran Church 8600 East Bush Lake Road | Main entrance North lot |
| 18 The Church of St. Edward’s 9401 Nesbitt Avenue South | SW entrance Upper level, SW lot |
| 19 St. Stephen Lutheran Church 8400 France Avenue South | Main entrance (W) West lot |
| 20 Washburn Elementary School 8401 Xerxes Avenue South | Main entrance Northeast lot |

CHECK YOUR REGISTRATION STATUS ONLINE

The Office of the Secretary of State is offering voters an easy way to check whether they are registered to vote.

Visit www.sos.state.mn.us and select [Elections](#), [Voting](#), “[Am I registered to vote?](#)” Once you provide your name, birth date and address, the service will tell you whether you are registered to vote at your address. The service also provides information on upcoming election dates, polling places and more, all specific to your location.

Locate your precinct polling place prior to Election Day by using the above map or by visiting our website.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: POLLING SITES.



| Precinct/Polling location | Entrance/Parking |
|---|--|
| 21 Sunrise Park Shelter 9401 Bloomington Ferry Road | Only entrance (N) North lot |
| 22 Normandale Hills Elem. School 9501 Toledo Avenue South | Main entrance West lot |
| 23 Community of the Cross Lutheran Church 10701 Bloomington Ferry Road | Main entrance (N) North lot |
| 24 Bloomington Lutheran School 10600 Bloomington Ferry Road | Main entrance (S) South lot – disabled use East side |
| 25 Bethany Missionary Church 6900 Auto Club Road | West entrance West and North lots |
| 26 Southwood Center 4901 West 112th Street | West entrance West lot |
| 27 Bethany Missionary Gymnasium 6900 Auto Club Road | Main entrance South lot |
| 28 Bloomington Fire Station #6 8601 Lakeview Road | Main entrance North lot and street |
| 29 Christ the King Lutheran Church 8600 Fremont Avenue South | SW entrance Southwest lot |
| 30 Oak Grove Presbyterian Church 2200 West Old Shakopee Road | Main entrance Northeast lot |
| 31 St. Bonaventure Catholic Church 901 East 90th Street (Social Hall) | Main entrance East lot |
| 32 Oxboro Evangelical Free Church 9431 Nicollet Avenue South | North entrance North lot |